

The Templar

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Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure, Suspense

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2012-06-17 20:21:04

Updated: 2012-06-17 20:21:04

Packaged: 2016-04-27 02:17:10

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,463

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: When men are faced with odds that overwhelm them, past any reasonable breaking point, many find refuge in activities that provide escape. Some turn to drink, others to the depths of rage itself. However, on a devastated colony one such man will turn instead to a relic of Terra's ancient past, finding purpose in a long dead order.

The Templar

****Disclaimer:** I own jack diddly squat of the Halo Franchise. Ah to have a slice of that pieâ€|**

****Isolation****

Small puffs of dust rose as a solitary figure trudged away from a ruined group of buildings. At the sound of a distant mechanical whine the figure tensed, then scurried into a small ravine nearby, rolling under the cover of a hanging ledge. Minutes later a single low-flying indigo shape screamed overhead, oblivious to the fugitive below it. Long moments passed as a fiery orb sank down towards a distant horizon. With a motion reminiscent of a gopher, the figure popped its head out of the ravine, scanning for potential threats. Satisfied with its scan, the figure once again began the trek across bare wilderness, away from prying eyes.

>Arriving at a vast concrete building pockmarked with strange burn marks, the figure swiftly fled into the labyrinthine interior via an unnatural opening. Following burnt out corridors, the raggedly cloaked specter ducked through a doorway suffering from acute disrepair that lead into a cavernous hangar. Reaching a work bench the fugitive unslung a grimy pack, and spilled the contents over to the surface. Sleek, curved alien weapons tumbled out along with several purple spheres. The last item out was a singed book, a child's if the bright colors were any indication. The figure grasped the book, reverently leaning it next to an odd assortment of knickknacks on an adjacent bench.<p>

Turning slowly away from the collection as if pained, the shrouded individual gathered the jumbled weapons. Carrying their inactive forms over to various bins, the person sorted the weapons according to some unknown process. Returning to the first bench the figure began transferring various weapons upon it to the bench. Two massive pistols were followed by a cloth covered rifle, all carefully placed, as if life-giving tools. Finally, after several round shapes were gently rested in a nearby bin along the wall, a long straight knife finished the collection of lethal instruments.

Upon completion of the task the shrouded individual underwent the ordeal of removing its ragged cloak. Dried brown splotches painfully tore away from the underlying clothing and flesh to reveal several crusted wounds. Arriving at the final strip of the cloak, the individual stifled an oath as the cloth was pulled away revealing a trailing burn wound starting at the lower hip that ran to just above the lower back. Getting up from its previous position, the masked form strode over to a makeshift faucet and tub. Turning a circular metal disk, steaming water began to slowly stream into the basin below it. Fingerless gloves were set aside as dirt caked hands thrust themselves under the flow of water.

The individual tensed as its hands scraped the grime away from the elbows down to the hands. Exhaling a quiet "Dammit" the masked specter yanked both hands from the offending flow of water, red, clean, and dripping with heated water. Tenderly pulling off the vest above the shirt, the individual sucked in a pained breath as the coarse material dragged along the underlying wounds. The shirt below was not even a recognizable single color, rather an accumulation of bloodstains, dirt, and splotches of its original color. Gingerly unbuttoning the long sleeve, the individual cautiously peeled the cloth off the body underneath, finally shrugging the garment to the floor.

A lean torso was revealed, covered with mottled bruises, pale pink scars, and the newest testaments to a harsh life. Reaching to the back of the mask, callused fingers untied multiple straps allowing concealing fabric to fall away from the face below. Limp greasy hair, freed from its containment, tumbled to the base of the neck while the revealed young man took a deep, unrestricted breath for the first time in a long while. Thinning temples were gently massaged by fingers intent as if to relieve a dull throb, or rub away unwanted memories. Turning to face the flow of water a wry, world-weary smile cracked across his mouth in response to some unknown, amusing secret.

Snagging a square of dark material hanging off a convenient pipe nearby, the man ran it under the water, allowing the heat to soak in. After several moments, the fugitive wrung the cloth out, only to reluctantly swab at the various cuts, scrapes, and bloodstains across his upper body. Face contorted in a pained wince, the man continued a cycle of rinsing the washcloth in the nigh boiling water, and wringing the excess water away. The cycle carried on with a cleaning of the wounds present with a mixture of flushing the matter filled wounds with water then cleaning them and the less dangerous

>injuries with dark fabric, to finally rinsing the cloth again. All this was punctuated with harsh strings of vile words to screams uttered in blinding agony.<p>

Finishing this portion of treatment, a nearby toolbox was opened to reveal gauze, needles, thin clear thread, several tubes, and three black containers. With the utmost care and one desperate yet unfulfilled glance at a bottle filled with small black pills, he unscrewed the lid off one of the black containers. Removing the end of a large syringe, the black bottle was cautiously tilted to pour a stream of clear liquid into the reservoir. Carefully resealing the opaque vessel the fugitive immediately slid the plunger back into place. Thus again began a tortuous cycle. The plunger was depressed to jet a thin stream of liquid that immediately began to foam on contact with a wound. Several wounds along with the trailing burn were revisited several times with the periodically refilled syringe. When the foam died down on each laceration or scrape the washcloth was used to dab away the remnants. Upon completion of the disinfecting of each wound, without any pause or recuperation the lonely individual began to suture shut a few of the deeper wounds, taking care to keep the wounds either packed or held shut.

Grimacing in evident pain, the haggard fugitive finished his agonizing task. Only bandaging remained for him now. Slowly and with tender care, the solitary man gingerly wrapped his torso and various wound sites. Finally complete with care of his body he stumbled forward pulling down a zippered bag from a dusty shelf, intent on yet another necessary task. Various cloths, brushes, and bottles were revealed as the bag was opened wide. Making several trips, the bandaged man gathered all the weapons he had used on his expedition bringing them to the work area covered with the cleaning kit.

Silently the man seated himself on a nearby stool, beginning his work on a massive M6 D variant pistol. Disassembling the instrument of death, he spread the pieces out across the work surface. With that he began the lengthy task set before him: breaking down the guns, cleaning every piece and dirt filled crevice, and reassembling each battle worn piece of his arsenal. Upon completion of this, he once again gathered the collection in his arms before making his way around crates and piles of rubble to a wall lined with a veritable treasure trove of weapons. With all the care given to beloved tools, the lone man hung up his weapons on empty rungs.

Turning away, the man stifled a yawn as he trudged to a pile of blankets and cushions. Before turning in, he bowed his head before a handmade cross; lips moving in prayer. Caught up in silent devotion, the man remained on his knees for the better part of thirty minutes before rising unsteadily. A solitary tear trickled down his gaunt cheek as he noticed the collection of random items he had brought back from where he had once lived. A memorial to the life he had once held and those who fell during the invasion.

Once again tears brimmed to the surface, and this time he let them fall unhindered. Shoulders wracked with sobs, he slipped off a necklace that appeared to be the handiwork of a young child before tumbling into his pile of blankets. Falling into welcome slumber, the last sight that his wet eyes saw before blackness enveloped him was that of his project. The Templar, a relic from Terra's ancient past, redesigned to bring retribution to those who destroy humanity. His way of ensuring vengeance against the Covenant, those who had taken so much from him.

****Just a piece of writing and an idea I've had lingering around.**

"What happens when you push a man past his breaking point due to the circumstances he was forced to live through?" is a interesting scenario to play out. **

Thanks for reading. Leave a PM or Review with your thoughts, ideas, complaints, or flames. Anonymous reviewers are welcome. Till next chapter, MysticalFett out.

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